

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SCCT-01 ACDA-07 /077 W

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P R 181336Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3889

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 5799

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINR TS

SUBJECT: PRESS ANNOUNCES MEMBER OF TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

BAADER-MEINHOF ARRESTED IN TUNISIA IN JUNE

1. ALL TUNIS MORNING PAPERS ON AUGUST 18 REPORTED
BASICALLY SAME STORY REGARDING ARREST OF "GERMAN"
KLAUS-DIETER HIMMELSBACH IN LATE JUNE. ACCORDING TO
THESE REPORTS, HIMMELSBACH, A MEMBER OF THE
TERRORIST ORGANIZATION" BAADER-MEINHOF,"
WAS EXTRADITED TO THE FRG ON AUGUST 7.
UNTIL TODAY EMBASSY WAS UNAWARE OF HIMMELSBACH'S APPREHENSION
AND OF HIS REPORTED SUBSEQUENT EXTRADITION. WE CAN OFFER
NO EXPLANATION FOR FACT THAT STORY HAS COME TO LIGHT NOW
ALTHOUGH STORY TODAY OBVIOUSLY AUTHORED BY GOT.

2. GIST OF STORY IS AS FOLLOWS: HIMMELSBACH ARRIVED
IN TUNIS AT SMALL FISHING PORT OF HERGLA IN THE GULF OF HAMMAMET,
ACCOMPANIED BY 19-YEAR-OLD ADELE KAMMERZELT ABOARD THE SELENIA,
AN ITALIAN SPONGE FISHING BOAT, SOMETIME IN LATE

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JUNE. THE BOAT, WHICH CARRIED ONLY HIMMELSBACH AND KAMMERZELT, HAD BEEN PICKED UP ADRIFT SHORTLY BEFORE BY A TUNISIAN FISHING BOAT AND WAS TOWED INTO HERGLA BY THE FISHERMEN.

3. THE TWO SPENT ONE NIGHT IN HERGLA, LEAVING THE NEXT DAY WITHOUT WARNING. LOCAL SECURITY AUTHORITIES WERE ADVISED, AND THE COUPLE WAS LOCATED SEVERAL DAYS LATER IN TUNIS. INFORMATION OBTAINED IN SUBSEQUENT INTERROGATIONS CONFIRMED BY FRG AUTHORITIES, REVEALED THAT HIMMELSBACH WAS A FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE IN THE FRG AND THAT HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE BAADER-MEINHOF, FOR WHICH HE WAS PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN HOMETOWN OF STUTTGART IN 1974. IN STUTTGART HE EVIDENTLY MET KAMMERZELT, WHOM HE CONVINCED TO JOIN HIM IN A TRIP TO MOROCCO WHERE THE PAIR SUPPOSEDLY STAYED WITH HIMMELSBACH'S SISTER. AFTER A STAY IN MOROCCO OF UNSTATED DURATION THE COUPLE RETURNED TO EUROPE TRAVELING ACROSS FRANCE THROUGH ITALY DOWN TO THE SMALL PORT OF MAZZARA DEL VALLO ON THE SOUTHERN COAST OF SICILY. IN MAZZARA DEL VALLO THEY MADE FRIENDS WITH THE SELENIA'S ITALIAN OWNER. THE PAIR REPORTEDLY OBTAINED PERMISSION TO STAY ON BOARD AND ON JUNE 20, FINDING THEMSELVES ALONE, THEY STOLE THE VESSEL AND SET SAIL FOR AN UNSTATED DESTINATION. IT WAS AT THIS POINT THAT THEY BECAME LOST AND WERE EVENTUALLY PICKED UP BY TUNISIAN FISHERMEN. THE GIRL (STILL ACCORDING TO THE PRESS) WAS RETURNED TO HER FAMILY THROUGH THE FRG EMBASSY AT AN UNSPECIFIED DATE, WHILE HIMMELSBACH WAS HELD UNTIL AUGUST 7 WHEN HE WAS EXTRADITED TO FRG.

4. COMMENT: WE WILL ENDEAVOR TO OBTAIN THROUGH GOT OFFICIAL SOURCES AND FRG EMBASSY MORE DETAILS ON THIS EVENT AND SOME INDICATION AS TO WHY THE CASE WAS SO CLOSELY HELD UNTIL TODAY. MULCAHY

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